

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSM-03 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 DLOS-09 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00
AGRE-00 AID-05 /116 W
-----077000 221151Z /64

P R 221059Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6193
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 4617

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: BOR, JO, IS0 XF, PGOV
SUBJECT: ARAB LEAGUE COMMISSION MEETING ON SUPPORT FOR
WEST BANKERS

1. ARAB LEAGUE (AL) HELD UNPUBLICIZED MEETING IN AMMAN
MAY 13-18 OF AL'S SUBCOMMISSION ON SUPPORT FOR STEAD-
FASTNESS OF RESIDENTS OF OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. SUB-
COMMISSION CHARGED WITH DISCUSSING WEST BANK SITUATION
WITH GOJ AND, ON BASIS THIS INFORMATION, DRAWING UP
PROPOSALS FOR CONSIDERATION BY FULL AL COMMISSION WHICH
BEGINS ITS MEETINGS MAY 23 IN CAIRO.

2. WE UNDERSTAND THIS IS FIRST TIME AL HAS CONVENED
THIS COMMISSION. STEADY MIGRATION OF POPULATION FROM
OCCUPIED TERRITORIES HAS APPARENTLY ALARMED AL MEMBERS
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SUFFICIENTLY TO SPUR THEM INTO ACTION. HOWEVER, IN EFFORT
TO PREVENT OBLIGATORY AND PROBABLY UNHELPFUL PUBLIC
COMMENT FROM ARAB GOVERNMENTS, AL ASKED GOJ TO SILENCE
ALL REPORTING ON CONFERENCE. GOJ COMPLIED --
APPARENTLY WITH RELIEF, SINCE IT PREFERRED IN ANY CASE
NOT TO PUBLICIZE MEETING WHICH PLO REPS WERE TO ATTEND.

3. REPRESENTED AT SUBCOMMISSION MEETING WERE JORDAN (BY DIRECTOR OF WEST BANK AFFAIRS COMMITTEE SHAWKAT MAHMOUD AND UNDERSECRETARY MINFIN FARHI OBEID), KUWAIT (BY AN EMBASSY AMMAN REP), EGYPT (BY GOE AMBASSADOR TO AL TAHSIN BASHWR AND ONE OTHER), SYRIA (BY GEORGE LNU, ALSO ACCREDITED TO PLO AS ITS EDUCATION ADVISER), ARAB LEAGUE (BY DIRECTOR OF PALESTINE AFFAIRS OFFICE MUHAMMAD AL-FARA) AND PLO (BY LEADER OF PALESTINE NATIONAL FUND AND PLO EXCOM MEMBER DR. WALID QAMHAWI, JORDAN PLO OFFICE DIRECTOR ABU JABARRA AND AN UNIDENTIFIED HASHAM RASHID).

4. SUBCOMMISSION REPORT PROPOSED THAT AL EXTEND TOTAL OF JD 360 MILLION (APPROX. \$1 BILLION) OVER NEXT FIVE YEARS TO IMPROVE LIFE OF WEST BANK AND GAZA RESIDENTS SUFFICIENTLY TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO STAY. PROPOSALS CONCENTRATE ON FOLLOWING FIELDS: AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION, EDUCATION, HEALTH, MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT, TRANSPORTATION, INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND RADIO AND TELEVISION. FUNDING FOR MAJOR AGRICULTURAL AND IRRIGATION PROJECTS PROPOSED FOR WADI FARA'A NEAR NABLUS AND SECOND AREA NEAR JERICHO. FARHI OBEID, WHOSE FAMILY OWNS LARGE WEST BANK BUS COMPANY, REPORTEDLY PROPOSED, RATHER SELF-SERVINGLY, SPECIAL FUNDING FOR IMPROVEMENT OF BUS SERVICES. QAMHAWI WAS REPORTEDLY STRONG PROPONENT OF "FREE EDUCATION" IDEA -- INTRODUCTION
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OF USE OF RADIO AND TELEVISION FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES.

5. FUNDING IS OF COURSE CRUCIAL TO SUCCESS OF "STEADFASTNESS SUPPORT" PROGRAM AND, AS ALWAYS, IS NOT AT ALL ASSURED. SAUDIS ARE OBVIOUS FIRST CHOICE TO PROVIDE FUNDS; THAT THEY DECLINED INVITATION TO ATTEND SUBCOMMISSION MEETING DOES NOT BODE WELL. KUWAIT ATTENDED BUT HAS NOT COMMITTED ITSELF FINANCIALLY IN ANY WAY. OF INTEREST IS QAMHAWI'S PARTICIPATION WHO, AS LEADER OF PALESTINE NATIONAL FUND, HAS PARTICULAR INTEREST (AND POSSIBLY EXPERTISE) IN FINANCIAL SIDE OF COMMISSION'S WORK.

6. THIS IS NEW ATTEMPT ON PART OF AL TO DEAL WITH REAL PROBLEMS OF WEST BANKERS; WE WILL BE INTERESTED TO SEE HOW SUBCOMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS FARE IN NEXT WEEK'S COMMISSION MEETING.
SUDDARTH

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